GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2961
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2017
Metre Gauge into Broad Gauge Line
Kaswan Shri Rahul;Maragatham Smt. K.;Shewale Shri Rahul Ramesh

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has decided to convert the entire metre gauge tracks into broad gauge in the country including Rajasthan and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Railways has fixed any time frame to complete the same and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the broad gauge conversion projects in many parts of the country is moving at very slow speed which will lead to escalation of cost further; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Railways to expedite the work on the said gauge conversion projects?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2961 BY SHRI RAHUL SHEWALE, SHRI RAHUL KASWAN AND SHRIMATI K. MARAGATHAM TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 02.08.2017 REGARDING METRE GAUGE INTO BROAD GAUGE LINE

(a): All unsanctioned Meter Gauge lines in working condition of Indian Railways including those falling fully/partly in the State of Rajasthan (excluding Heritage lines) have been included in the Budget 2017-18 for conversion to Broad Gauge line. About 830 km of such lines have been sanctioned.

(b) to (d): Completion of a project depends upon several factors including availability of funds, complete handing over of encumbrance free land by the State Government, forestry clearances, shifting of utilities, Road over/under bridges, canal & electrical crossings etc. Moreover, funds to each project are allocated every year depending on the total budget outlay, progress made in each project & relative priority. So targets for completion of projects are set every year and therefore it is not possible to quantify cost/time overrun in real terms. Since most of these factors are beyond the control of Ministry of Railways, no time-frame can be fixed for completion of the projects.

Indian Railways have taken following steps to increase pace of execution of projects:-

Making higher fund allotment for projects: The capital expenditure for Railways has been increased from `58,718 Crore in 2014-15 to around ` 93,795 Crore in 2015-16 to `1,11,661 Crore in 2016-17 and a plan size of ` 1,31,000 Crore has been kept for 2017-18.

Delegation of Powers to the field officers for tenders and estimates: The Zonal Railways have been delegated full powers with respect to works contracts. Full powers have been given to General Managers of Zonal Railways with respect to sanction of estimates. This has also resulted in cutting down time for sanction of estimate and tenders.

Institutional financing: By tying up loan with M/s Life Insurance Corporation of India Limited for `1.5 Lakh Crore for assured funding of viable projects has increased Railways' capacity for committed fund provision for essential projects.

Coordination with State/Central Ministries: To expedite the project execution and better coordination with State/Central Ministries, regular coordination meetings are being held with Ministries/Departments/State Government Authorities. A senior Railway Officer has been nominated as a Nodal Officer to deal with each State Government.

These initiatives have resulted into a remarkable increase in commissioning of New Lines, Gauge Conversions and Doublings. A progress of 7.75 Km per day of network expansion was achieved in 2015-16 compared to an average of 4.1 Km per day being achieved in previous 10 years from 2004 to 2014. During 2016-17, 2855 Km track has been commissioned by introducing passenger services.

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